

## Message Text

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71

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DOTE-00 EB-11 FEA-02 AGR-20 COME-00

AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

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/149 W

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R 241523Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7115

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 2085

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1990

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ECON, XK, CS

SUBJECT: COSTA RICAN HLC VIEW OF JALAPA MEETING

REF: (A) SAN JOSE 1955

(B) SAN SALVADOR 1970

1. SUMMARY: SOLANO AND BERROCAL OF COSTA RICA'S HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE (HLC) ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT CHANCES OF JALAPA SUMMIT MEETING RO RESOLVING SALVADOR-HONDURAS PROBLEM. WHILE SOLANO FINDS RETURN TO MODUS OPERANDI SCHEME INTELLECTUALLY ATTRACTIVE, HE ASSIGNS LITTLE IMPORTANCE TO BUITRAGO'S SUGGESTION SINCE HONDURAS-SALVADOR PROBLEM MUST BE RESOLVED FIRST. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MAY 22 EMBOFFS DISCUSSED WITH RODOLFO SOLANO AND FERNANDO BERROCAL OF COSTA RICA'S HLC UPCOMING C.A. PRESIDENTS' MEETING IN JALAPA AND RECENT VISIT OF SALVADOR CACM HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE BUITRAGO.  
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COSTA RICANS ASSESSMENT OF JALAPA WAS PESSIMISTIC. THEY

SEE NO DEVELOPMENTS ON POLITICAL FRONT WHICH WOULD LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH IN STATUS QUO. THEY IMPLIED THAT COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT ODUBER HAS COME AROUND TO THIS WAY OF THINKING AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT WHEN JALAPA MEETING FIRST ANNOUNCED ODUBER STATED THAT THE MEETING WOULD GO ON UNTIL A SOLUTION TO THE CURRENT STALEMATE WAS REACHED. ODUBER IS NOW TALKING AS IF JALAPA WILL BE ONE IN A SERIES OF PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL MEETINGS.

3. SOLANO EXPLAINED HIS PESSIMISM RE THE JALAPA SUMMIT BY RECOUNTING WHAT HE BELIEVES ARE THE CURRENT POLITICAL REALITIES IN THE VARIOUS CENTRAL AMERICAN CAPITALS. HONDURAS AND SALVADOR CONTINUED TO BE LOCKED IN ON THEIR BORDER DISPUTE WITH NEITHER APPARENTLY ABLE NOR WILLING TO GIVE INTO THE OTHERS DEMANDS. MOREOVER SOLANO QUESTIONS WHETHER GUATEMALA OR NICARAGUA ARE REALLY COMMITTED TO HELPING SOLVE THE PROBLEM. HE QUESTIONED GUATEMALA'S MOTIVES SINCE THE HONDURAS-SALVADOR DISPUTE HAS REDOUNDED TO THE BENEFIT OF THAT COUNTRY'S COMMERCIAL POSITION (INCLUDING ATTRACTING INVESTMENT FROM EACH OF THE DISPUTANTS IN ORDER TO GET AROUND THE RESTRAINTS IMPOSED ON TRADE). SIMILARLY HE QUESTIONED NICARAGUA'S MOTIVES BECAUSE OF SOMAZA'S VARIOUS BUSINESS VENTURES, E.G., THE SALVADOR-NICARAGUA FERRY BOAT.

4. IN SOLANO'S ANALYSIS, THE ONLY COUNTRY WHICH COMES OUT WITH A CLEAR CURRENT COMMITMENT TO RESOLVING THE CACM CRISIS IS COSTA RICA. SOLANO REITERATED DANIEL ODUBER'S GENUINE PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO A REVITALIZED CACM. HE BELIEVES THAT ODUBER WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE STRONG LEADERSHIP IN THIS AREA AND STATED THAT THE RECEPTION GIVEN ODUBER BY THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICANS HAS BEEN CORDIAL. HE ATTRIBUTES THIS TO ODUBER'S WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN A REAL DIALOGUE WITH HIS PEERS AS CONTRASTED TO FORMER PRESIDENT FIGUERES' OPSG DISPARAGEMENT OF HIS CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS.

5. REGARDING PARAGRAPH 6 OF REFERENCE B, SOLANO DID NOT APPEAR TO ASSIGN TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO BUITRAGO'S VISIT. SOLANO IS CLEARLY INTELLECTUALLY ATTRACTED TO BUITRAGO'S PROPOSED RESURRECTION OF THE MODUS OPERANDI FORMULA.  
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(SOLANO WAS AN AUTHOR OF THE SCHEME IN 1970.) AS A PRAGMATIST, HOWEVER, HE SEES A RETURN TO THE MODUS OPERANDI PLAN OR ANY SUCH PLAN AS ESSENTIALLY A WASTE OF TIME UNLESS SOME BREAKTHROUGH CAN FIRST BE ACHIEVED ON THE BORDER PROBLEM. HONDURAS IS NOT ABOUT TO GIVE UP ITS TRUMP CARD--THE CLOSURE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HIGHWAY TO SALVADOR TRAFFIC--UNTIL ITS POLITICAL GOALS ARE ACHIEVED. WHILE NEITHER SOLANO NOR BERROCAL WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT AN EARLY POLITICAL SOLUTION WOULD

BE WORKED OUT, BERROCAL THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS SOME CHANCE THAT A COMPROMISE ALONG LINES STARTED IN MEXICO WAS FEASIBLE, BY AGREEING TO DELINEATE THOSE AREAS OF THE FRONTIER WHICH AJ NOT REALLY DISPUTED.

6. OTHER TOPICS DISCUSSED INCLUDED THE RECENT EBERLE VISIT TO MANAGUA--SOLANO ASKED FOR BRIEFING--AND BANANAS. CONCERNING BANANAS SOLANO SAID THAT SIECA SECRETARY GENERAL MAYORGA HAS TOLD HIM THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A DOCUMENT SETTING FORTH THE U.S. G. POSITION AGAINST THE PROPOSED \$1 TAX ON BANANA EXPORTS WHICH LATTER DESCRIBED AS EXTREMELY TOUGH. LANE

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